Mr. President : I wish to associate myself with what has been said on the floor of this House to the memory of the late Mr. M. K. Raman, and I am sure hon'ble members would fully realise how keenly I feel the death of Mr. Raman. Even within a few months of my coming into the State, I fully appreciated the potentialities of Mr. Raman and I made up my mind that the Government should ere long utilise the services of Mr. Raman in a more effective manner in the public service. When he was rapidly promoted as the Head of a Department some thought that the promotion given was too high ; but from the experience of a few months in the Excise Department Mr. Raman has justified his selection. His loss is not merely a loss to the community but to the State as well. It is my duty to convey to the members of his family my deep sense of sorrow at this loss.

The resolution was passed nem con all the members standing.

Statement Regarding Select Committees.

Mr. President : With regard to the Select Committee appointed to consider the Cochin Debtors' Relief Bill, I wish to make a statement for the consideration of this House. When this Bill was referred to the Select Committee, the House decided that the report of the Committee should be presented to this House within one month. In spite of this specific reference of the Legislative Council, in the very first meeting of the Committee, the Committee resolved that they should go round the State and take evidence, and I got a requisition from the mover of the Bill that the Committee should be given four months' time more to submit the report. When the Council thought that the matter was of an urgent character and that the report should be submitted within one month, I think it is too much to expect the Diwan-President to take upon himself the responsibility of extending the time limit by four months. But that is not the main point to which I wish to draw the attention of the House. The Committee decided at the very first meeting that they have to go round the State to take evidence. I have observed that the procedure of a Select Committee of the legislature on a Bill, of going round the country and taking evidence, is a peculiar feature of this legislature only. I have had a fairly long experience of the Madras Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly in Delhi and I might for the information of this House say that such a procedure is unknown in those legislative bodies. The Select Committee on a Bill either in

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Delhi or Madras or other Provinces sits only at the headquarters and it is only on rare occasions that the Select Committee invites an expert to come and elucidate them on any technical point or give any particular information which the individual is in possession of. Apart from that, Select Committees do not take elaborate evidence. It is only in the case of Commissions and *Ad Hoc* Committees that are appointed by the Government for specific purposes that they generally go round the country and take evidence. It is now for this House to decide whether they should continue the old practice of allowing the Select Committees to go round the State and take evidence. Personally I think it is not at all necessary. For one thing it involves a very considerable expenditure of Government money, and apart from this, it causes serious inconvenience to the official members of the Select Committees when they are called upon to attend the meetings in addition to their own duties. From my own experience both in this Council and elsewhere I have no hesitation in saying that this procedure is not at all necessary. In fact ample provision has been made in the Standing Orders for cases in which the House thinks that public opinion should be taken. It is contained in S. O. No. 31. It is open for any member to move at a stage that the Bill before the House be circulated for eliciting public opinion. When a Bill is before the House and the House thinks that the Bill is of such a nature that public opinion should be invited, then the proper procedure will be, before referring the Bill to the Select Committee, to move the motion for circulating it for eliciting public opinion. In such cases Government themselves will circulate the Bill, and collect the opinions and place them before the Committee. It is my experience as a member of various Select Committees both in Delhi and Madras that, where for example, particular interests are affected by a Bill and if they think it necessary to make representations before the Committee, they of their own accord come to the place where the Select Committee sits and give their opinion. I would therefore suggest that it would be advisable for this House to follow the recognised pro isions and discontinue this practice of allowing Select Committees to tour round the State. I happened to mention this to a few members including the Minister and I would like to know what they have got to say in this matter.

Mr. T. K. Nayar (*Pazhayannur*): We have no objection.

* **Mr. C. R. Iyyunni** (*Trichur-South*): In my opinion, in my individual capacity—I had not the time to discuss the matter with

* Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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the other members—what I think about the matter is this. So far as British India is concerned the various interests that are affected are enlightened and cultured. So far as Cochin is concerned they do not meet together and discuss the matter and put in their representations or objections. The public opinion here is not so organised as in British parts. At least in view of the fact that the opinions are not so organised, it would be better that in at least two places the Committees may be allowed to sit. In British India they know the procedure to be adopted. Here they do not know what exactly is the procedure. They do not take so much interest. At least in the case of Bills which have very serious repercussions the Committee may be allowed to meet in two places.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ: സർ, ഞങ്ങളുടെ പാർട്ടി മിക്കവാൻ പ്രസിഡെ ണ്ടുവർക്കും പറഞ്ഞതുപോലെ സ്വീകരിക്കുവാൻ തയ്യാറാണ്. പക്ഷെ, ബ ഹുമനപ്പെട്ട മെമ്പർ ഇവിടെ പറഞ്ഞതിനെപ്പറ്റി എനിക്ക് ഒരു സംശയം പ റയുവാനുണ്ട്. ബ്രിട്ടീഷിൻഡ്യയിലെ ജനങ്ങളേക്കാൾ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമ ണത്തിനു പാകത വന്നിട്ടുള്ളവരും, മുന്നോട്ടു പോയിട്ടുള്ളവരുമാണ് കൊച്ചി ക്കാർ എന്നുള്ള വിശ്വാസം ഞങ്ങൾക്കുണ്ട്. അതിൽനിന്നു മിക്കവും പി ന്നോക്കം പോകുവാൻ ഞങ്ങൾ ഒരുക്കമില്ല.

Dr. A. R. Menon (*Minister for Rural Development*): In rare cases can we not meet at Trichur and Ernakulam?

Mr. President: There is that procedure for eliciting public opinion. It is primarily for this House to decide the procedure. If this House decides that the Select Committee should report within one month and the Committee at the very first meeting resolves to extend the time by four months, it is inconsistent with the opinion expressed by this House. If this House thinks that the Bill is of such a nature that it should not be rushed through but that the public should be given an opportunity to express its opinion the proper motion is that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon (*Mulakunnathukavu*): Sir, there are two propositions involved. The first proposition is that it will not be advisable to go about the country and take evidence upon the provisions of a Bill. The President has pointed out certain provisions in the Standing Orders under which this House and the Select Committee appointed by this House can get proper information from the persons affected by the particular legislation. I have not the slightest hesitation whatever to agree with the President, that roaming about the State to collect materials for a Bill is absolutely unnecessary. My experience as a member of the Select Committee appointed to consider the Cochin Nayar Bill goes to show

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that the evidence that we collected from 11 or 12 centres was absolutely useless for the purpose of framing the Bill. It is therefore my considered opinion that it is absolutely unnecessary to go about the country to collect opinion.

The next proposition involved in the statement is for the purpose of the particular Bill which is before the House, viz., the Debtors' Bill, whether the Select Committee should roam about the country. My own personal opinion is that it is unnecessary because the members of this House had been moving similar motions based upon the valuable opinion collected and placed before the House and the Government by the Antony Committee. There are also several materials which the members are in possession of from the various journals and newspapers. I think it is unnecessary that the Select Committee should roam about the country and take evidence. There will be Bills in future in which it may be necessary for the Select Committees on rare occasions to take views of experts. I think the proper procedure is to give a direction to the Select Committee at the time it is constituted whether it should roam about the country to take evidence.

Mr. President: As pointed out by the hon'ble member there may be special cases in which occasions may arise when expert opinion may be necessary. I think the proper procedure is to throw the responsibility on the House in such cases. I would suggest that the proper procedure is for the experts to come to the headquarters and give their expert opinion. Even if they are paid travelling allowance it will be cheaper. In any case it is a matter of detail. In the case of this Bill I think that they need not take evidence. I think this is the opinion of the House. I shall communicate this to the Select Committee.

Mr. M. K. Devassy (*Adur*): What about the extension of time?

Mr. President: It is extended now, since the next session is only after four months.

Announcement of Bills assented to by His Highness the Maharaja.

Secretary to the Council: Under S. O. 5 (2) I have to announce to the Council that His Highness the Maharaja has been graciously pleased to give His Highness's assent to the following Bills passed by the Council.

(1) The Cochin Local Authorities Entertainment Tax Bill.

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